



# California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)

## Questions and Answers

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## General Program Information

### **What is the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)?**

State law (Senate Bill 2), passed in 1999, authorized the development of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) that students in California public schools will have to pass to receive a high school diploma, beginning with the graduating class of 2004.

### **What is the purpose of the CAHSEE?**

The purpose of the CAHSEE is to improve student achievement in high school. It also is to help ensure that students who graduate from high school can demonstrate competency in state content standards for reading, writing, and mathematics.

### **Who must take the CAHSEE in spring 2002?**

All students in grade 10 must take the CAHSEE in spring 2002, except those who took the exam in spring 2001 and passed both parts. As of the 2002 administration, ninth graders may **not** take the exam.

CAHSEE Testing Dates 2001–02		
Section 1 English-Language Arts	Section 2 English-Language Arts	Mathematics
Tuesday March 5, 2002 May 7, 2002	Wednesday March 6, 2002 May 8, 2002	Thursday March 7, 2002 May 9, 2002
Location	Location	Location
Local high school site	Local high school site	Local high school site

### Why do students take the high school exit examination in grade 10 instead of grades 11 or 12?

Students must have many opportunities to meet the CAHSEE requirement for a high school diploma. Requiring the exam to be taken for the first time in grade 10 provides the opportunity for students who are unsuccessful to receive additional instruction and to retake the exam.

### Must students who are not fluent in English take the CAHSEE in grade 10?

Passing the exam may be delayed for English learners up to 24 calendar months from enrollment in the California public school system. The students must complete six months of instruction in reading, writing, and comprehension in English during this period. All English learners **must take** the exam in English, and then these students must pass it to receive their high school diploma.

### Who do I talk to about my student's results?

Talk to your student's English or mathematics teacher or the school counselor.

### What if students do not take the test?

If a student does not take the CAHSEE and pass it, he or she will not receive a high school diploma. Education Code Section 60851(a) states: "Commencing with the 2003–04 school year and each school year thereafter, each pupil completing the grade 12 shall successfully pass the exit exam as a condition of receiving a diploma of graduation or a condition of graduation from high school."

### Can students and parents/guardians be allowed to see the CAHSEE before it is given?

Actual questions for spring 2002 will be seen only by the students when they take the examination. This security measure will ensure that the CAHSEE is fair for all students. Released questions from the exam given in 2001 have been posted on the Internet at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee/>. Teacher guides and

addenda for English-language arts and mathematics also are available on the Internet to provide sample questions and other CAHSEE information.

### **What does the English-language arts test in 2002 cover?**

The English-language arts part of the CAHSEE, to be given in spring 2002, addresses state-adopted content standards through grade 10. The exam consists of multiple-choice questions and two written essays. The reading section covers vocabulary, informational reading, and literary reading. This section includes 50% literary tests and 50% informational texts. The texts are grade appropriate and accessible to students in grade 10.

The writing section covers writing strategies, applications, and conventions. The exam also has one written response to literature or an informational passage and another written response to a writing prompt.

### **What does the mathematics part of the test in 2002 cover?**

The mathematics part of the CAHSEE, to be given in spring 2002, addresses state-adopted standards through algebra I. The exam includes statistics, data analysis and probability, number sense, measurement and geometry, mathematical reasoning, and algebra. Students also are asked to demonstrate a strong foundation in arithmetic, including working with decimals, fractions, and percents. The mathematics exam consists of all multiple-choice items.

### **How can schools best prepare students for the CAHSEE?**

It is important that teachers provide instruction in state content standards for English-language arts and mathematics. Students will need to use their knowledge of the standards identified for the test.

### **How do parents/guardians find out if their student's school uses the same or similar standards as state content standards?**

Parents/guardians should ask their student's teachers or principal if the school curriculum is aligned to state content standards in English-language arts and mathematics. Parents/guardians also should ask how teachers are helping students achieve these standards.

### **What if a student is absent on testing days?**

Students will have multiple opportunities each school year after the initial examination in grade 10 to take the CAHSEE; therefore, students missing a testing date will wait until the next testing date to take it.

### **What will happen if a student doesn't pass the CAHSEE in grade 10?**

Students are to retake the CAHSEE until the English-language arts and mathematics parts are passed, and they retake only that part not passed. Districts

and/or schools are to provide additional instruction to assist students who do not pass the exam. Intervention programs, including summer school for students who do not pass the exam, must also be provided.

**Is the May test date only for year-round schools?**

No, in the 2001 – 2002 school year, schools may choose to offer the CAHSEE in March or May. See the Examination Administration Dates on the CAHSEE website under “Administrative Documents.”

**Can a student who does not pass the CAHSEE receive a certificate of completion and participate in graduation ceremonies?**

For information regarding certificates of completion, diplomas, and participation in graduation ceremonies, refer to Education Code sections 56390 through 56392 as well as 51410 through 51412.

**Is there a limit to the number of times that a student may take the test?**

A student may take the CAHSEE once in grade 10, 3 times in both grade 11 and grade 12, and once after graduation.

**How is it determined if a student is in grade 10?**

Section 1200 (d) of the regulations for CAHSEE states, “‘Grade level’ for the purposes of the high school exit examination means the grade assigned to the pupil by the school district” (California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Division 1, Ch. 2, Subchapter 6). There is not a state definition for grade level.

**Which testing session will be used for the initial testing of tenth graders, beginning in 2002-2003?**

Section 1204 of the regulations states: “Each pupil in grade 10 shall take the high school exit examination only at the spring administration.” This could mean March or May depending on the testing dates selected by the district.

**If a student has met all other requirements for graduation but has not yet passed the CAHSEE, can the student just come to school to take the test without attending regularly?**

No. Section 1200 (e) of the regulations states: “‘Eligible pupil’ means one who is enrolled in a California public school in any of grades 9, 10, 11, or 12 who has not passed either the English/language arts section or the mathematics section of the high school exit examination.”

## **Special Education/Accommodations**

**Must all students in grade 10, including the severely disabled students in a Special Day Class (SDC), take the CAHSEE?**

All students who are planning to graduate and receive a high school diploma must pass the CAHSEE (see Education Code section 60851 (a)). If an IEP team determines that the student is not working towards a high school diploma, the student does not have to take the CAHSEE; however, both the student and parents/guardians need to know the consequences of not taking the CAHSEE.

**What accommodations for students with disabilities will be allowed?**

Students with disabilities may take the CAHSEE with those accommodations that the students have regularly used during instruction and classroom assessments as delineated in the student's individualized education program or 504 plan that are appropriate and necessary and that do not alter what is being tested.

The State Board of Education is proposing the following definitions in the California Code of Regulations Section 1200 (j): "An appropriate testing accommodation is any variation in the assessment environment or process that does not fundamentally alter what the test measures or affect the comparability of scores." Accommodations are made in order to provide a student equal access to learning and equal opportunity to demonstrate what is known. Accommodations must not provide inappropriate assistance to the student within the context of the test. All accommodations must be specifically listed in the student's IEP or 504 plan.

**Who makes the decision on what accommodations are needed?**

The IEP team or the 504 team make decisions on what testing accommodations modifications a student needs to take the CAHSEE.

**For the more severely disabled students who function in the elementary range of academic skills and are served in special day classes, does the IEP Team have the authority to waive the CAHSEE when it is clear the student can not pass and is not able to meet standards for a diploma?**

The team must make sure that the parents understand the consequences of this decision. The team should document the decision and the discussion of consequences in the IEP.

**Are school districts required to administer the CAHSEE to special education students who have not yet passed the CAHSEE and continue to qualify for special education services until they "age out" (i.e., students turn 22 years of age)?**

As long as the student continues to work toward a public high school diploma, he or she may continue to take the CAHSEE.

**Must a review of IEP/504 meetings be held for all students to specifically address the CAHSEE if their annual meetings have already taken place or if they will take place after testing?**

It is not necessary to automatically schedule meetings for all IEP/504 students in grade 10. This only becomes necessary if, after personally reviewing the IEP/504 plans, the special education teacher/504 coordinator determines that the CAHSEE and its accommodations have not been adequately addressed. This would be the case even if the IEP/504 meeting had just been held.

**It is understood that reading a text to a student compromises the construct of a reading test. But if an essay were tied to a piece of reading, would it be appropriate to read the text for a student prior to attempting the essay?**

Section 1217 (c) of the CAHSEE regulation states that an audio or oral presentation of the English-language arts portion of the test “is not allowed because that has been determined to fundamentally alter what the test measures.

**The regulations (Section 1217 (b) (1))state, “reduced numbers of items per page.” It does not specify “with no reduction in test items.” Would not a reduction in test items alter the test?**

No. This type of questing is testing the students understanding of what he or she has read. Furthermore, “reduced numbers of items per page” refers to enlarged text that would decrease the total number of items that would fit on one page. **This would not reduce the total number of items tested** but would increase the total number of pages. Reducing the number of total test items is not allowed.

## English Language Learners

**Are there accommodations for English learners?**

Article 3, Section 1217.5 of the CAHSEE regulations states that the school district, in addition to the instruction in reading, writing, and comprehension in the English language specified in Education Code Section 60852, may provide additional time as provided in Section 1215.

## Student Preparation

**Is any instructional material available for preparing students to take the CAHSEE?**

Currently, teacher guides for both mathematics and English-language arts are available on the CAHSEE website at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee/> (Internet). The teacher guides include released exam items as well as the scoring rubrics, student papers, and teacher commentary for the writing tasks. In late fall 2002, a workbook will be available to assist in preparing students for the CAHSEE. Each student in grade 10 will be given a workbook at no cost. Additionally, the workbook will be available on the CAHSEE website.

## Test Administration

### **What are the eligibility requirements for test proctors and administrators, i.e., who can administer the CAHSEE?**

The CAHSEE regulations, Section 1200. (g) states: “ ‘Test administrator’ means a certificated employee of a school district who has received training in the administration of the high school exit examination from the high school exit examination district or test site coordinator.”

Section 1200 (h) states: “Test proctor” is an employee of a school district who has received training specifically designated to prepare him or her to assist the test administrator in administration of the high school exit examination.”

## Supplemental Funding for Instruction

### **What must districts and charter schools do to receive funds for supplemental instruction to students who are at risk of not passing the CAHSEE?**

After implementing a program, track and report the hours on the J-18/19 district attendance form (charter schools are to report on the appropriate charter attendance form). The funds are calculated and paid through the principal apportionment. In the fiscal year 2001-02, the rate per hour is \$3.38. If a class does not run for one full hour, the time must be tracked by minutes then divided by 60 to be reported on the attendance forms. Passing time cannot be counted.

For further information regarding reimbursement for supplemental instruction, contact Terri Emery, School Fiscal Services Division/Principal Apportionments at [temery@cde.ca.gov](mailto:temery@cde.ca.gov) or 916-324-4551.

## Scoring and Reporting

### **Do CAHSEE results appear on transcripts?**

The CAHSEE regulations, Section 1206 states that, (a) “School districts shall maintain in each pupil’s or adult student’s permanent record the following information: (1) The date on which the pupil or adult student took each section of the examination; (2) Whether the pupil or adult student passed or did not pass each section of the examination taken,” (b) The record required by Section 1205 shall be created and the information required by subdivision (a) of this section shall be entered in each pupil or adults record prior to the subsequent test cycle.” There is

no prohibition against placing the results on the transcripts but it should be limited to pass or fail and not include the score.

## **Adult Education**

### **Which “adult students” will take the CAHSEE in 2002?**

Adult students enrolled in a program leading to a high school diploma, who anticipate completing their high school studies in the 2003–2004 school year or each school year thereafter, are required to pass the CAHSEE.